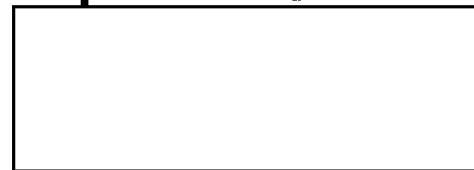
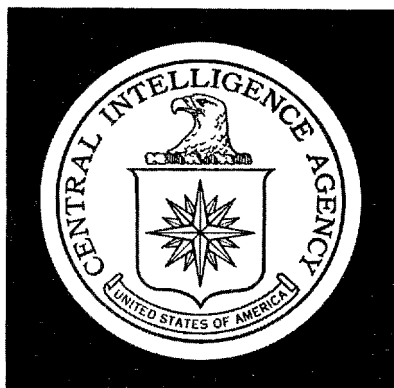


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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam-

USAF review(s) completed.

Top Secret

112

19 June 1967



25X1

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Approved For Release 2006/03/17 : CIA-RDP79T00826A002100010052-5

Information as of 1600
19 June 1967

25X1

HIGHLIGHTS

A Communist force of battalion size (probably from the 5th VC Division) attacked a command post of the US 11th Armored cavalry engaged in Operation AKRON on 18 June. POWs indicate that the North Vietnamese are infiltrating replacements for units in I, II, and III Corps.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:

Two major engagements were reported between US infantry/armor elements and Viet Cong forces within a 30-mile radius of Saigon during 18-19 June (Paras. 1-4). There are continuing reports that North Vietnamese Army troops are infiltrating into South Vietnam in "filler" groups to reinforce existing Communist formations in the South (Paras. 5-8).

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III. Military Developments in North Vietnam:

A shift in DRV fighter tactics may have taken place as a result of severe losses of MIGs in May (Paras. 1-2). US pilot reports [] indicate the DRV pilots are picking fewer fights with US aircraft and are flying at low altitude where their greater maneuverability and AAA support may favor their chances (Paras. 3-4).

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IV. Other Communist Military Developments:

There is nothing of significance to report.

V. Communist Political Developments:

There is nothing of significance to report.

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Two major engagements were reported between US infantry/armor elements and Viet Cong forces within a 30-mile radius of Saigon during 18-19 June.

2. In one action some 30 miles east-southeast of Saigon an estimated battalion-size Communist main force unit lost 45 killed in the course of an abortive one-hour ground assault against the command post of elements of the US 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment participating in Operation AKRON in Phuoc Tuy Province. The attack, which was preceded by heavy mortar and recoilless rifle fire, resulted in American casualties of eight killed and 31 wounded.

3. There are indications [redacted] that the enemy force in contact may have been the 1st Battalion/274th Viet Cong Regiment/5th Viet Cong Light Infantry Division. The 5th Division headquarters and its two subordinate regiments--the 274th and 275th--traditionally operate in southeastern III Corps, although there is tenuous evidence that the 275th Regiment may have temporarily relocated north of Saigon to War Zone "D" to receive NVA replacements and to re-equip and retrain. Operation AKRON, which in addition to US armored units includes three battalions of the US 9th Infantry Division and one ARVN ranger battalion, is designed to clear elements of the 5th Division and local Viet Cong forces from a major Communist base located in the Phuoc Tuy - Long Khanh - Bien Hoa province tri-border area.

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4. Meanwhile, ten miles southeast of Saigon, there was heavy contact on 19 June between five companies of the US 9th Infantry Division and a Viet Cong force of undetermined size during the conduct of a "mobile riverine operation" along the inland waterways of Gia Dinh Province. According to preliminary casualty reports, 30 enemy troops have been killed compared with US losses of 21 killed and 67 wounded. In addition, four US helicopters have been downed by enemy ground fire.

North Vietnamese Army Infiltration

5. There are continuing reports that North Vietnamese Army troops are infiltrating into South

19 June 1967

Vietnam in "filler" groups to reinforce existing Communist formations.

6. An NVA private captured in Quang Ngai Province on 11 June states that he infiltrated through Laos into South Vietnam early this year and upon arrival was assigned to the 2nd Viet Cong Regiment/3rd NVA Division. The private reports that his infiltration unit, the 260th Battalion, was subordinate to a training regiment in North Vietnam and that the 260th was the first of six battalions scheduled to infiltrate South at the rate of one every two months.

7. These statements confirm those of another NVA soldier captured on 11 May, who also claimed to have infiltrated this year with a 350-man 260th Battalion which reinforced the 3rd NVA Division in Quang Ngai Province.

8. [redacted] NVA replacements have arrived this spring to reinforce major enemy formations elsewhere in South Vietnam, including those in the northernmost and central parts of I Corps, the highlands and coastal areas of II Corps, and the area of III Corps north of Saigon.

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19 June 1967

25X1

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Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2006/03/17 : CIA-RDP79T00826A002100010052-5

III. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH VIETNAM

1. Mounting losses of MIGs may have prompted the DRV Air Force to undertake a partial modification of its customary fighter tactics. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] reports from US pilots during the month of June indicate fewer instances in which North Vietnamese pilots initiated air engagements and a greater tendency on their part to fly low-risk defensive patrols at low altitudes.

2. These tactics are in marked contrast to those employed by the DRV during May, when large numbers of North Vietnamese MIGs displayed great aggressiveness in attacking US strike and fighter aircraft at a variety of altitudes and under conditions not always in their favor. In this period at least five MIG-21s and 21 MIG-17s were lost in air engagements and an undetermined numbers of additional aircraft were destroyed on the ground. Losses of this magnitude make a re-evaluation of tactics on the part of the DRV Air Force not unexpected.

4. If a deliberate shift in DRV fighter tactics has taken place it may be of short duration. A shortage of aircraft would call for operations of this sort, but in the past North Vietnam has been able readily

19 June 1967

III-1

to replenish its air order of battle from reserves in country or in China or by receiving additional aircraft from China or the Soviet Union. There is no reason to believe that these options are no longer available to the DRV.

19 June 1967

III-2

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IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

19 June 1967

IV-V - 1

Approved For Release 2006/03/17 : CIA-RDP79T00826A002100010052-5

25X1

Approved For Release 2006/03/17 : CIA-RDP79T00826A002100010052-5

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